

**LUMPKIN COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
Special Called Meeting
AGENDA

Lumpkin County Courthouse
Conference Room
Dahlonega, Georgia
August 9, 2007
5:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Gooch

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

III. NEW BUSINESS

- Proposed Lumpkin County 2008 Budget

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS

V. ADJOURN

Chairman Gooch

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING OF
THE LUMPKIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

August 9, 2007

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was originally scheduled to take place in the Commissioners Conference Room but was moved due to the large number of public attendees. Chairman Gooch called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. in the Superior Courtroom at the Lumpkin County Courthouse. Stephen Gooch, John Raber, Deborah Hutcheson, Clarence Stowers and Clarence Grindle were present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Commissioner Stowers made a motion to approve the agenda. This motion was seconded by John Raber and approved by all district commissioners. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed Lumpkin County 2008 Budget

Materials were handed out pertaining to loss of revenue and a new proposal for possible 2008 Budget cuts referred to as "Plan C". County Manager Stan Kelley said he, Finance Director Allison Martin and Mark French have been back through the operating budget and found different line items that can be cut. He said if we do these cuts, however, we might have regrets in 2008.

Commissioner Raber read from "Plan A" and "Plan B", presented at a previous meeting, and said that the cuts listed in those Plans were not among the recommendations made by the committee that he and Commissioner Stowers had attended. Kelley explained that he had been instructed to come up with some suggested cuts. He said that he came up with a list that he believed were non-critical services currently provided by the county. Commissioner Raber expressed concern about recommendations to cut personnel from the Sheriff's Department.

Sheriff McClure spoke about why he does not want to list revenue from out-of-county inmates for 2008. His concern is that he has only two detention officers per shift. The Sheriff said that he has had this discussion concerning out-of-county inmates with the board every budget year. He then explained the billing process for these inmates and pointed out that all of this money goes into the General Fund.

The Sheriff said his first concern is the safety of Lumpkin County's citizens. He pointed out that there have not been breakouts since he became Sheriff. He said he does not want revenue from inmates included in his budget because he does not want to do so unless he can be sure that this revenue is realistic. He said if the demand is still there to house out-of-county inmates, and the detention center is fully staffed, he would be willing to house out-of-county inmates.

The Sheriff said that cutting his budget will simply not work. He said that his agency is one of the few that makes money for the County. The Sheriff said he returned \$50,000.00 to the county budget last year but now wishes he had not done that. He pointed out that the work crews from the jail save the County a great deal of money due to the work that they do. The Sheriff explained his plan to get four detention officers certified and put them on the road. He said he thinks this will be a wash as far as their entire salary package with revenue from out-of-county inmates.

Commissioner Hutcheson said she wants to make certain that the Sheriff understands that her motion in a previous meeting had nothing to do with personalities. She said it was based only on the materials provided to her. Commissioner Hutcheson then said that she did not look at only the Sheriff's budget but looked at the whole court system.

Commissioner Stowers said that when he looked at the budget and saw "\$0.00" for inmate revenue he was very concerned. The Sheriff said that he still does not want to commit to any specific amount of revenue for inmates but will do all that he can to keep costs down and increase revenue in his area.

Commissioner Hutcheson suggested showing \$200,000.00 revenue in the budget for housing out-of-county inmates. She pointed out to the Sheriff that we have to have some number from which to work and that he should do his best to achieve that revenue. In return the Sheriff asked that his budget include the four new officers and fifteen new cars for receipt in January. He said that these could be paid for over time as a lease-purchase with a loan through ACCG.

Captain Tony Garcia of the Sheriff's Department said that his officers bring in much revenue but then do not see themselves benefiting with more salary. He said the county pays for them to get certified then they go to another county where they can make more money.

Commissioner Raber said that the Development Authority brought six women to town and treated them in grand fashion. He pointed out that the county paid \$250,000.00 for property for the Development Authority. He said that we need to focus on the lack of results from the Development Authority. He then said he finds it offensive that we focus instead on cutting such areas as the Senior Center. Commissioner Raber stated that we couldn't tax ourselves into prosperity. He said that if we do fund the salary study that our jailors will still start at \$2.00 less than those in Dawson County and that we have to address the essential items now and that we have to address economic development.

Commissioner Hutcheson said she would like to have Commissioner Raber speak with the Development Authority Board with his concerns about them. Commissioner Raber reminded the board that in his goals and objectives for this year that he said that the full Board of Commissioners should sit down with the Development Authority and suggest to them that they hire someone who can get the job done.

Chairman Gooch stated his opinion that the discussion this evening has been good and healthy.

Motion: Commissioner Raber made a motion to adopt Plan C understanding that the increased millage rate will raise no more than \$442,000.00 (approximately a half-millage rate increase). Commissioner Raber rescinded his motion to enable staff to come up with final numbers that will be put to the vote next Thursday night.

A citizen asked about the Development Authority and expressed concern that the public does not have access to full information. The Chairman encouraged him to go to the Development Authority meeting this coming Tuesday morning. The Chairman said that in his view the Development Authority has done some good things over the past year or so and that citizens should make a point of learning about this.

ADJOURN

There being no further business Chairman Gooch called for an adjournment at 6:25 p.m.

Motion: Commissioner Raber moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Clarence Grindle. All district commissioners approved the motion. Motion carried.

8/16/2007
Date

Attest:

Ruth A. Bohac
Ruth A. Bohac
Clerk, Lumpkin County

Stephen W. Gooch
Stephen W. Gooch, Chairman
Lumpkin County Board of Commissioners